



The Spectacle

From the Office Down the Hall

“19th Century Sputnik”

Last Fall I found an old, black and white, Sony Trinitron TV called “the Sputnik” at a garage sale (I paid a dollar for it). It was a very funky, black plastic sphere about 14 inches across that was designed to hang by a short loop of gold chain. I plugged it in and was very happy to see several local channels slowly materialize from a small field of grey and black snow. I’m not at all sure where such a marvelous example of 1970s technology should hang in one’s house, but my wife suggested it was a moot point, anyway. So I gave it to my friend, Caitlin, for Christmas.

At 23, Caitlin is in her final year of college and immediately admired the TV’s funky retro-ness and the fact that it—very quaintly—had knobs. Quite pleased with myself, I told her, “now you have your very own Sputnik.”

“Whatever,” she said.

I was taken aback—just as I am when someone says, “now who was Lee?” Somewhere in my basement I have a 45 r.p.m. record (cut from the back of a cereal box) of Neil Armstrong’s 1969 transmission from the moon. Similarly, the faint beeps heard around the world in 1957 as Sputnik I soared high overhead are now easily accessible on NASA’s web site. Because, just as we hold Robert E. Lee’s writing chair in Arlington House, these sounds have been saved as artifacts of landmark events. It has even been argued that Sputnik I and Apollo 11 are defining moments of the 20th century. Writing about Sputnik, visionary and writer Arthur C. Clark, said, “When the story of our



Arlington House and L’Enfant grave

age comes to be told, we will be remembered as the first of all men to set their sign among the stars.”

The United States had been planning a 3½ pound satellite sometime in 1958. So when the Soviets scooped the world by first launching the 183-pound Sputnik and then quickly following it with the half-ton Sputnik II (that included Laika the dog), Physicist Edward Teller, patron saint of the hydrogen bomb, said the United States had lost “a battle more important and greater than Pearl Harbor.” Yet when I recently asked a 22 year-old history major about Sputnik, she could only guess. And Sputnik was only 48 years ago. What hope do we have for remembering the defining moments from a hundred years before that?

Sputnik may have been one of the single most important events in the 20th century, yet it is now slipping away in a stream of nuclear bombs, DNA and computers. Walter Cronkite said Sputnik was an “event that forever changed our world.” In 1861, Robert E. Lee made a decision at Arlington House that forever changed *their* world. In *The Lees of Virginia*, Paul Nagel writes, “The meeting between Blair and Lee remains one of those points in American History where even scholars are tempted to speculate concerning “what if...?”” Lee’s decision may be America’s 19th century Sputnik. His decision may well underlie much of our modern social and political landscape, but, like Sputnik, the significance of what happened at Arlington

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Area Special Events

April 1

Slide/lecture, virtual tour of sites (using photographs) associated with the Fall of Richmond, April 1865, at the Civil War Visitor Center at the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, VA. 7 pm. Free. 804-226-1981 or www.nps.gov/rich.

April 1-3

Women's History Symposium, "To Bind Up a Nation's Wounds, Caring for [Them] Who Have Borne the Battle," at the Gettysburg National Park, PA. Fee charged. Registration: 717-334-1124 extension 420.

Symposium, "The Crime of the Century - Aftermath," Kidnap plot to killing, the Lincoln assassination and what happened next, at the Surratt House Museum in Clinton, MD. Details: www.surratt.org or 301-868-1121.

April 2

Walking tour, "The Breakthrough" (at Petersburg), pre-dawn, real-time lantern tour on the historic battlefield at Pamplin Historical Park, south of Petersburg, VA. Tour is free but reservations are needed. 877-PAMPLIN. Other park activities during the day include talks, living history and more. They are free with park admission. www.pamplinpark.org.

Living history, "Confederate History and Heritage Program" with camp and parlor music, displays and more at the old courthouse, Chesterfield County Complex, 10020 Ironbridge Road (Route 10 south of Richmond, VA). Noon-3 pm. Free. 804-377-0438 or email CConfederateHF@aol.com.

"Capital of the Confederacy Memorial March" down Monument Avenue in Richmond, VA honors Confederate soldiers in Hollywood Cemetery. Begins 2 pm. Remains of four Confederate soldiers will be buried in the cemetery following the march. More info: 804-789-0184 or www.vascv.org.

Living history and other programs during Richmond Civil War Day at the Richmond

(VA) National Battlefield Park visitor center at the Tredegar Iron Works. Civilian and military demonstrations, talks and tours all day. 10 am-4 pm. Free. 804-226-1981 or www.nps.gov/rich.

Civil War Relic Show at the Eagle's Lodge, 21 Cool Springs Road, Fredericksburg, VA. Civil War artifacts and other items for sale. 9 am-5 pm. \$5. 540-372-6709 or email frhashow@yahoo.com.

Walking tours of Fort Gregg on the Petersburg National Battlefield, VA. www.nps.gov/pete or 804-732-3531.

April 2-3

Special exhibit on Gen. Lew Wallace, Union commander during the Battle of Monocacy and the author of Ben Hur, at the Monocacy National Battlefield near Frederick, MD. Free. 301-662-3515 or www.nps.gov/mono.

April 3

Walking tour, covers the course of Abraham Lincoln's visit to Richmond in April 1864. Two-hour, two-mile walk begins at 13th and Cary Streets in Richmond, VA at 2 pm. Free. 804-226-1981 or www.nps.gov/rich.

Bus tour, NPS historians lead this tour of sites associated with the Fall of Petersburg in 1865. 7.5-hour tour leaves 9:30 am from the Petersburg (VA) National Park visitor center. \$30 (does not include lunch) Reservations: 804-732-3531 extension 206.

April 7

Lecture, "When War Came This Way: Women's Experiences during the Civil War in Virginia," by Gen. John W. Mountcastle at the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, VA. Noon. \$5. 804-358-4901 or www.vahistorical.org.

April 8-9

Conference, "Reconciling the American Conflict: Causes and Legacies of the Civil War," sponsored by Shenandoah University and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, in Winchester, VA. Speakers

include Gary Gallagher, John Hennessy and Brandon Beck. \$145 before March 20; \$165 after. Details: email ssnyder@su.edu or call 540-535-3543.

April 8-10

Reenactment, "The Battles at Little Sailor's Creek," on the battlefield state park between Amelia and Farmville, VA. Event will include battles and recreations of the surrender ceremonies at Appomattox. Details: 434-223-2053 or www.saylorscreek.org.

Reenactment, "Pursuit to Appomattox," includes battles each day commemorating the 140th anniversary of Lee's Retreat and Appomattox. Also book signings, lectures and demonstrations daily. Located on 600 acres near Appomattox, VA. More info: www.appomattox.com or 434-352-2621.

April 8-12

Special anniversary tours, talks and living history programs at the Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, VA. Free with park admission. Details: 434-352-8987 or www.nps.gov/apco.

April 9

Lecture and slides, "Mary Todd Lincoln: Victim of History," at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, MD. On the hour 1-4 pm. Free with admission. 301-695-1864 or www.civilwarmed.org.

Battlefield Hike, ranger-led five-hour walk over the First Manassas Battlefield, VA. Begins at noon at the visitor center. Free with park fee. 703-361-1339 or www.nps.gov/mana.

Book signing, Dr. John Coski will sign copies of his new book, The Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem, at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, VA. Signing noon-5 pm. Talk at 3 pm. 804-649-1861 or www.moc.org.

April 9-10

Civil War Weekend in Suffolk, VA. Living history, talks, tours and much more. Details: 866-SeeSufk or www.suffolk-fun.com.

Area Special Events (continued)

Civil War Show at the Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, in Chantilly, VA. 9 am-5 pm Saturday; 10 am-2 pm Sunday. \$8. 703-823-1958.

April 15

Fundraiser for the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, MD. Basket Bingo at St. John's on Prospect Hill. \$15 advance/\$20 at door. Details: 301-695-1864 or www.civilwarmed.org.

April 16

Tour, "John Wilkes Booth Escape Route," 12-hour bus tour follows the footsteps of Lincoln's assassin from Ford's Theater through Maryland and into Virginia. \$50. Reservations required. Sponsored by the Surratt House Museum, Clinton, MD. Details: www.surratt.org or 301-868-1121.

Bus Tour, "The Battle of Brandy Station," sponsored by the Friends of Fort Ward in Alexandria, VA. Leaves Fort Ward 7:30 am, returns 5 pm. \$90 includes lunch. Reservations: 703-838-4848.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Arlington House was the home of Robert E. Lee and his family for thirty years and is uniquely associated with the Washington and Custis families. It is now preserved as a memorial to General Lee, who gained the respect of Americans in both the North and the South.

Arlington House
The Robert E. Lee Memorial
c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Phone
703-235-1530

Web Site
<http://www.nps.gov/arho>

The Spectacle online
<http://www.nps.gov/arho/tour/spectacle.html>

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Living history torchlight tour of Mayfield Fort in Manassas, VA. Learn about Civil War camp life and tour the Manassas Museum System's restored fort. 6-9 pm (special 7 pm tour for children and families). \$15 adults/\$10 children. www.manassasmuseum.org or 703-368-1873.

Bus tour, "Civil War Sampler," includes Richmond's (VA) Civil War sites, neighborhoods and battlefields. Sponsored by the Valentine Museum. 1-5 pm. \$18. Reservations: 804-649-0711 or www.richmondhistorycenter.com.

Battlefield Hike, ranger-led five-hour walk over the Second Manassas Battlefield, VA. Begins at noon at the visitor center. Free with park fee. 703-361-1339 or www.nps.gov/mana.

Bus tour, "The Capital of the Confederacy" leaves for Richmond from Lee Hall Mansion in Newport News, VA. 9 am-5 pm. \$45. Reservations. 757-888-3371.

April 16-17

Special programs at the Baltimore (MD) Civil War Museum at President Street Station commemorate the April 1861 riot. \$6 includes museum admission. Details: 410-385-5188 or www.mdhs.org.

Special event, "Last Capital of the Confederacy Anniversary Weekend," at the Sutherlin Mansion in Danville, VA. Van tours of Danville's Civil War sites (\$2), living history encampment and demonstrations. 9:30 am-4:30 pm both days. Free. More info: www.danvillemuseum.org or 434-793-5644.

Civil War Weekend at Pamplin Historical Park, VA, living history, demonstrations and much more. Free with admission. 877-PAMPLIN or www.pamplinpark.org.

April 17

Walking tour, "Monument Avenue... Its Heros, Homes and Residents!" meets at the Lee Monument in Richmond, VA. 2-4 pm. \$7. 804-649-0711 or www.richmondhistorycenter.com.

April 23

Bus tour, "John Brown," includes visits to Charles Town and Harpers Ferry, WV, and various related Northern Virginia sites. Leaves from Claude Moore Park in Sterling, VA. \$45 plus \$5 admission fees to sites. Box lunch available. Reservations: 703-444-1275.

Battlefield Hike, ranger-led five-hour walk over the First Manassas Battlefield, VA. Begins at noon at the visitor center. Free with park fee. 703-361-1339 or www.nps.gov/mana.

Symposium, "Beyond April 1865," sponsored by the Museum of the Confederacy, held at the Library of Virginia Library in Richmond, VA. Guest speakers investigate the aftermath of the war. Fee charged. More info: www.moc.org or 804-649-1061.

April 23-24

Living history, "Union Surgeon," at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick, MD. 11 am-3 pm. Free with admission. 301-695-1864 or www.civilwarmed.org.

April 24

March for Gettysburg, fund-raising walk sponsored by the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, PA. Details: www.friendsofgettysburg.org or call 717-334-0772.

April 30

Battlefield Hike, ranger-led five-hour walk over the Second Manassas Battlefield, VA. Begins at noon at the visitor center. Free with park fee. 703-361-1339 or www.nps.gov/mana.

Tour, "John Wilkes Booth Escape Route," 12-hour bus tour follows the footsteps of Lincoln's assassin from Ford's Theater through Maryland and into Virginia. \$50. Reservations required. Sponsored by the Surratt House Museum, Clinton, MD. Details: www.surratt.org or 301-868-1121.

Significant Historic Events in April

April 30, 1781

George Washington Parke Custis, the seventh child of John “Jack” and Eleanor “Nelly” Calvert Custis, was born at Mount Airy, Maryland.

April 22, 1788

Mary Lee Fitzhugh, the future Molly Custis, was born at “Chatham” near Fredericksburg. (“Chatham” now serves as park headquarters for the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields Memorial National Military Park and is open to the public.)

April 30, 1805

WP Custis inaugurated his first sheep-shearing at Arlington Spring, an event which was held on or about his birthday through April 30. The sheep-shearing consisted of an exhibition of rams and ewes which were then shorn. Mr. Custis awarded prizes to the owners of sheep with the heaviest and finest wool. After a customary feast beneath the Washington war tents, the host usually made a speech, frequently stressing the importance of American economic independence from Europe.

April 1, 1824

Robert E. Lee accepted an appointment as a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point. He had been appointed by Secretary of War John C. Calhoun.

April 11, 1834

After almost three years of marriage, Mary Lee was concerned that her husband had not yet experienced a religious conversion. “I cannot but feel that he still wants the one thing without which all the rest may prove valueless,” Mary confided to her mother. “We read the Bishop’s pastoral letter which he pronounced excellent, but made no further comment.”

April 25, 1836

GWP Custis notified the superintendent of the Capitol that he would send his agent to remove his painting, “the Battle of Trenton,” from the building, saying he hoped “for more

charity from the public toward the production of a self-taught artist. A set of hired scribblers who infest the Capitol must abuse someone, or something, that the Labourer may be worthy of his hire...I have now ordered Rice to remove the picture and on his return to cast it from the Bridge into the Potomac that it may offend no more.”

April 23, 1853

Mary Lee Fitzhugh Custis died at Arlington House at 1:20 p.m. on the day following her 65th birthday, two days after suffering a stroke. Doctors advised she “looked very grave & told us she was in much peril.”

April 27, 1853

Mrs. Custis’s funeral was held at Arlington House. Because of Mr. Custis’s condition, the service was private and conducted by the pastor of Christ Church, Alexandria. Afterwards, “the coffin was borne to the grave by four servants — Austin, Lawrence, Daniel and Ephraim — followed by Mrs. Lee and her daughters, a number of relatives, and a long train of weeping servants. Mrs. Lee provided her friends with bouquets of spring flowers, and as the coffin was lowered into the grave, these were cast in upon it in a last gesture of affection and respect.”

April 12, 1861

The Confederate States fired on the federal forces at Fort Sumter, Charleston Harbor, South Carolina.

April 13, 1861

Federal forces at Fort Sumter surrendered.

April 17, 1861

Lee received two letters. One was from General Winfield Scott asking him to call at his office in Washington on April 18. The other was from Francis P. Blair, former publisher of the “Congressional Globe,” and father of Postmaster General Montgomery Blair, who asked Lee to meet with him on the morning of April 18 at Blair’s home.

The Virginia secession convention voted to adopt the Ordinance of Secession by a vote

of 88 to 55, and set May 23 as the date for a public referendum on ratification. However, Lee did not learn of the adoption of the Ordinance until April 19.

April 18, 1861

Lee first met with Francis Blair at his home on Pennsylvania Avenue near the White House. Blair, at the authorization of President Lincoln and Secretary of War Cameron, asked if Lee would accept command of the army being organized. Lee stated in 1868 that he had “declined the offer...to take command of the army that was to be brought into the field, stating as candidly and as courteously as I could, that though opposed to secession and deprecating war, I could take no part in an invasion of the Southern States.”

After the Blair meeting, Lee met with General Scott, informed him of Blair’s offer and explained why he could not accept it. General Scott told Lee that if he proposed to resign from the United States Army, he should do so at once. According to a statement of Mrs. Lee made years later, General Scott also told Lee that he had made the greatest mistake of his life.

Lee’s third meeting that day was with his brother, Sydney Smith Lee, who was then on duty with the Navy in Washington. The details of the meeting are unknown, but it appears that the Lees discussed the question of resigning from the military service and that they agreed to meet again before taking any action.

This was the last day Robert E. Lee was to spend in Washington until after the Civil War.

April 19, 1861

Colonel and Mrs. Robert E. Lee went into Alexandria on business and there they heard the news that the Virginia convention had voted to adopt the Ordinance of Secession.

The Lees returned to Arlington where friends and relatives were gathering. Lee

Significant Historic Events in April (continued)

went outside and paced under the trees to the east of the garden for some time and then came into the house and went to his bed chamber. Those in the parlor below could hear his footsteps as he paced the floor.

According to J. William Jones, an early biographer, Lee was also “heard frequently to fall on his knees and engage in earnest prayer for divine guidance.”

April 20, 1861

After midnight, Robert E. Lee wrote 2 letters, a brief letter resigning his commission in the United States Army, and a longer letter to General Scott. According to J. Williams Jones, who had later spoken with Mrs. Lee, Robert E. Lee came down the stairs “calm, collected, almost cheerful, and said, “Well, Mary, the question is settled. Here is my letter of resignation, and a letter I have written General Scott.” According to another source—and somewhat less probably—Mary Lee is said to have replied, “Whichever way you go will be in the path of duty. You will think it right, and I shall be satisfied.”

April 22, 1861

Robert E. Lee left Arlington House for the last time. He traveled by carriage to Alexandria early in the morning, met Judge Robertson there, and both men boarded a train for Richmond.

They arrived in late afternoon and that evening met with Governor Letcher in the capitol, who informed Lee that the convention had passed an ordinance providing for the appointment of a commander for the military and naval forces of Virginia with the rank of Major General. “The advisory council had recommended Lee for this post. Letcher had formally tendered it to him on April 21, and had sent a messenger whom Lee had probably passed on the road.”

Lee accepted the position and that same night, before the convention adjourned, Lee’s name was sent for confirmation,” with a simple note that Lee had determined to

resign from the United States Army before the convention had created the office to which Lee was nominated. The convention at once and unanimously approved the choice.”

April 23, 1861

Robert E. Lee appeared before the Virginia secession convention to receive formal notice of his appointment. Convention President John Janney extolled Lee’s abilities with references to “Light Horse Harry” Lee and George Washington. Lee’s speech followed slowly and distinctly to “Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention: “...Trusting in Almighty God, an approving conscience, and the aid of my fellow citizens, I devote myself to the service of my native State, in whose behalf alone will I ever again draw my sword.”

April 5, 1863

General Lee, having suffered a probable undiagnosed heart attack in late March, wrote Mrs. Lee from a private home near Fredericksburg where he had been taken:

“I shall get quite well again. I am suffering with a bad cold as I told you, and the doctors thought I was threatened with some malady which must be dreadful if it resembles its name, but which I have forgotten. So they bundled me up on Monday last (March 30) and brought me over to Mr. Yuby’s where I have a comfortable room with Perry to attend to me. I have not been so very sick, though have suffered a good deal of pain in my chest, back, & arms. It came on in paroxysms, was quite sharp & seemed to me to be a mixture of yours & Agnes’s diseases...the doctors are very attentive & kind & have examined my lungs, my heart, circulation, etc. I believe they pronounce me tolerable sound. They have been tapping me all over like an old steam boiler before condemning it.”

April 7, 1865

General Grant sent General Lee an invitation to surrender: “The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of

further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that if it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the C.S. Army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.”

General Lee replied to General Grant’s note of the previous day: “To be frank, I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army, but as the restoration of peace should be the sole object of all, I desired to know whether your proposals would lead to that end. I cannot, therefore, meet you with a view to surrender the Army of Northern Virginia; but as far as your proposal may affect the C.S. forces under my command, & tend to the restoration of peace, I should be pleased to meet you at 10 a.m. tomorrow, on the old stage road to Richmond, between the picket lines of the two armies.”

April 8, 1865

“The road to Lynchburg, next goal of Lee’s badly harried army, passed through hamlets and villages and Appomattox Station near Appomattox Court House.” By the end of the day, the route to Lynchburg was blocked by Federal troops, and the Army of Northern Virginia was nearly surrounded by an overwhelming force.

“In the morning, Lee was informed that a number of officers had conferred the evening before and agreed the army could not get through to join Johnson and that he ought to open negotiations. Lee refused the suggestion, made to spare him from taking the lead in surrender. Other officers disagreed also. That night, near Appomattox, Lee held his final council of war.”

April 9, 1865

At dawn, near Appomattox Station, the Confederates attacked the Federal troops in front of them. “At first the infantry of Gordon and Fitzhugh Lee’s cavalry were successful, but there was more than just

Significant Historic Events in April (continued)

enemy cavalry in front of them. The route was blocked by infantry. The Union forces drove in, and on the east other Federals under Meade attacked the Confederate rear guard. Escape was impossible.” General Lee asked General Grant for a “suspension of hostilities pending the adjustment of the terms of the surrender of this army.”

In the early afternoon, Generals Lee and Grant met in the home of Wilmer McLean in Appomattox Court House. It was Palm Sunday and the Courthouse, itself, was locked.

“There was a brief discussion of terms...: officers and men surrendered were to be paroled and disqualified from taking up arms until properly exchanged; arms, ammunition, and supplies were to be turned over as captured property...The terms did not include surrender of side arms of officers or of their private horses or baggage, and allowed each officer and man to go home and not be disturbed as long as parole was observed. Lee then brought up the fact that cavalymen and artillerists owned their own horses, which would be needed for the spring planting. After a short conference, Grant agreed to let those who claimed horses have them. Arrangements also were made to feed Lee’s army from Federal supplies...Legend to the contrary, Lee did not surrender his sword to Grant.”

“Lee returned to his waiting, anxious army. As the men crowded around him, he spoke softly, ‘I have done for you all that it was in my power to do. You have done all your duty. Leave the result to God. Go to your homes and resume your occupations. Obey the laws and become as good citizens as you were soldiers.’ Hats off, the men stood with ‘swimming eyes.’ Lee rode bareheaded, his eyes to neither left nor right.”

April 10, 1865

General Robert E. Lee issued his last general orders: “After 4 years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming

numbers and resources...By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a Merciful God will extend to you His blessing and protection. With an increasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous considerations for myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell.”

“As General Order No. 9 was being prepared, word came to General Lee that Grant was on his way. Lee went to meet him and the two conferred for some time. Lee hoped that there would be no more sacrifice of life; Grant urged Lee to advise surrender of all the Confederate armies. Lee replied that this was up to President Davis. Other officers, including Meade, visited Lee. Memories and curiosity seemed to draw them all together.”

April 12, 1865

General Lee wrote to President Davis a report of the surrender of his army at Appomattox Court House. Then “quietly and unceremoniously he left his last headquarters” and rode toward Richmond accompanied by some members of his headquarters staff.

April 14, 1865

Shortly after 10 p.m., President Abraham Lincoln was shot in the head by John Wilkes Booth at Ford’s Theatre. The unconscious President was carried across the street to the home of William Petersen.

General Lee and his remaining staff members reached the home of Lee’s brother, Charles Carter, in Powhatan County. Because the house was crowded, Lee insisted on sleeping in his tent. “It was his final bivouac, the last night he ever slept under canvas.”

April 15, 1865

At 7:22 a.m., President Abraham Lincoln died.

General Lee reached Richmond in the middle of a spring downpour. He “had put aside his best uniform and had on one that had seen long service, but he still wore a sword...His mount was Traveller...a ride of less than a mile, from the pontoons to the residence at 707 East Franklin Street, the crowd grew thicker with each block. Cheers broke out, in which the Federals joined heartily. Hats went off, and uniform caps of blue along with them. General Lee acknowledged the greetings by uncovering repeatedly, but he was manifestly anxious to finish his journey as quickly as he could.”

Arriving in front of the house, he turned his horse over to one of the men attending the wagons. The heartbroken civilians of Richmond, widows, old men and maidens thronged him as the soldiers had at Appomattox. They wanted to speak to him and shake his hand and...touch his uniform...he grasped as many outstretched palms as he could. With his emotions strained almost to tears, he made his way to the iron gate, and up the granite steps. Bowing again to the crowd, he entered the house and closed the door. His marching over and his battles done, Robert E. Lee unbelted his sword forever.”

April 19, 1865

Funeral services for President Lincoln were held in the East Room of the White House.

April 20, 1865

General Lee, in a typically diplomatic letter to Jefferson Davis, urged the fleeing Confederate President to consider the “suspension of hostilities and the restoration of peace.”

April 28, 1909

The remains of Pierre Charles L’Enfant lay in state for three hours in the United States Capitol. At noon, a military escort conveyed them to Arlington Cemetery where they were buried with full military honors in front of Arlington House.

History Happenings

The Temple of Fame

During the historic period, the Arlington flower garden was one of the most important features of the landscape. The women of the family in particular viewed the garden as an almost sacred place. After Mrs. Custis' death in 1853, Agnes noted that she loved the garden even more because "when I look at her favorite flowers they remind me so of her." The garden was also associated with more lighthearted moments, such as Mildred's covert reading of the novels of which her father disapproved. While the garden was most famous for its various specimens of roses, other flowers such as paper whites, heliotropes, hyacinths, tulips, honeysuckle, and many more flourished there as well.

After the Lees left Arlington at the start of the war, many changes were made to the garden. One of the most significant was the demolition of the Lees' jessamine-covered summerhouse or arbor. In 1884, the structure was destroyed and replaced with the Temple of Fame. The temple was constructed from stone columns and entablature from the US Patent Office. The columns were inscribed with the names of famous Union generals, such as Grant, Farragut, Sherman, and Sheridan. Once finished, the temple was the garden's most prominent feature.

The temple was incorporated into the 1885 plan to redesign the flower garden as part of an effort to honor the Union war dead. D. H. Rhodes, the cemetery landscape gardener, drafted the design. The old garden fence was removed, and four new gravel walks from the east, west, north, and south met under the dome of the Temple of Fame. Inside, iron benches, designed to appear as if they were made of twigs, provided a seating area. Fifty new flower beds surrounded the structure.

For many years, the temple dominated the landscape of the garden. After the restoration program for the mansion commenced in the 1920s, the Commission of

Fine Arts suggested that the temple be removed. Despite this recommendation, the temple remained in the flower garden until it was finally removed in 1967. During an archaeological investigation of the ravine several years ago, the possible remains of the temple's columns were discovered.

The temple's history is a reminder of Arlington's complicated past. As opposing groups asserted their visions for Arlington, structures such as the Temple of Fame played a key role in the political battles that engulfed the property. To some, the temple was a symbol of Union victory and underscored the importance of the cemetery at the expense of the historic landscape. To others, the structure represented a desecration of the long-ago history and traditions of the Arlington that existed when it was the private estate of the Custis/Lee family. One hundred and fifteen years later, Mildred Lee's pain as she viewed the changes to the garden is still palpable. "I stood once more in the garden at Arlington. In place of the Jessamine arbor, was a hideous white pavilion, with the names of Lincoln, Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, etc. emblazoned in staring black letters. Every thing was gone . . ."



Cemetery Parking Passes to Expire

Please check the expiration date on your cemetery parking pass. Many of our parking passes will expire in April. If your pass will soon expire, please return your old parking pass to Mary Ratiff. She will issue you a new pass. You will need to give information about your car: make, model, and tag number. If have any question please call Delphine at (703) 235-1530.

Dresses on temporary exhibit

Two dresses will be on temporary exhibit at Arlington House until the end of April. One of the dresses dates from 1838 and is on display in the Family Parlor. According to the donor, the dress may have belonged to Thetta Quay Franks, the daughter of Jerome Quay, the man in charge of feeding soldiers at Arlington House during the Civil War. The dress is made of a golden shade of Jacquard woven silk and has low set sleeves, allowing for very little arm movement.

The other dress dates from 1855 and is on display in the Dining Room. The dress descended in the family of General James Lee and originally belonged to Betty Winston Fitzhugh, the daughter of George Fitzhugh of Brandy Station Culpepper, VA. She married Washington Peace of Philadelphia, PA in 1855 and the dress is believed to be part of her trousseau. The dress and jacket are made of striped silk taffeta and fringe.

Additional Volunteer Opportunities

Vegetable Garden Volunteers Needed— Here at Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial, we present a picture of 19th century southern life. In order to expand the interpretation of the Lee's life here, we plan to revive the Lee's vegetable gardens. We are looking for members of the community who would be interested in helping us grow heirloom vegetables in the gardens behind the house. This would be a great opportunity to get some fresh air and meet your neighbors. Volunteers would also be rewarded for their help with a portion of the vegetable harvest. If you are interested or know anyone who would be interested in the opportunity to both help out your community and get some fresh veggies, let us know. Also, if other venues for contacting possible volunteers such as email, mailings, meetings, or any other form of communication would better serve to get the word out, then please point us in that direction.

An organizational meeting will be held on Saturday, April 16, 2005 at 2 p.m. in the Old Administration Building (the Park Service Office for Arlington House) located within Arlington National Cemetery. We will begin planting the vegetable garden on Saturday, April 23, 2005 at 10 a.m. Please join us.

Arlington House Woodlands Rescue —Volunteers are needed to help eradicate invasive, exotic plants from the Arlington House Woodlands, an uncut vestige of forest George Washington Parke Custis set aside in 1802. Beginning at 9 a.m., work teams will remove invasive exotic plants. This event will be held the third Saturday of the month April – October.

Saturday, April 16, 2005

Saturday, May 21, 2005

Saturday, June 18, 2005

Saturday, July 16, 2005

Saturday, August 20, 2005

Saturday, September 17, 2005

Saturday, October 15, 2005

Garden Volunteer Work Days at Arlington House—Arlington House seeks Garden Clubs (and other groups) to co-sponsor garden work days at Arlington House. Garden Club work days will give Garden Clubs (and other groups) members an opportunity to volunteer their special skills, while enjoying the company and companionship of friends, acquaintances, and other gardeners. It is essential that the volunteers be experienced gardeners with detailed knowledge of gardening and plants.

Garden Volunteer Work Days will be held on Saturday mornings. If your group is interested in volunteering, please call Delphine Gross at 703 235-1530 ext 227 or e-mail Delphine_Gross@nps.gov

Co-sponsored by the Arlington Heritage Alliance, Arlington House,
the Arlington Black Heritage Museum, and the Arlington County Historical
Affairs and Landmark Review Board

Arlington Historical Society 49th Anniversary Banquet

Wednesday, April 27, 2005
Clarendon Ballroom, Arlington, Virginia

Guest Speaker: Brian Lamb
Founder and CEO of C-SPAN
and Host of the Television
Program, *Booknotes*

In 1979, Brian Lamb founded the not-for-profit C-SPAN network in Arlington, Virginia. He has served as the network's CEO since then, as well as host of the popular TV program, *Booknotes*.

Mr. Lamb will discuss the unique history of C-SPAN, including its founding as a source of gavel-to-gavel coverage of the U.S. House of Representatives, and its later expansion to include C-SPAN2 and C-SPAN3. With a resume that includes work as a freelance reporter for UPI Audio, a Senate press secretary and a White House telecommunications policy staffer, Mr. Lamb has also published three books based on *Booknotes*, and currently resides in Arlington.

RSVP by Friday, April 22 to Frank Impala

at (703) 533-0575 or impala.frank@juno.com.

Please indicate any special dietary requests (vegetarian, etc.).

Free Parking in the DHS/James Monroe Bank building at 3033 Wilson Blvd.
(corner of N. Highland and Wilson Blvd.; enter on N. Highland).

Also, street parking available throughout Clarendon.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

In *The Robert E. Lee Family Cooking and Housekeeping Book* by Anne Carter Zimmer, great-granddaughter of Robert E. and Mary Custis Lee, there are recipes for "Drinks with and without Alcohol". Mrs. Zimmer mentions that while Mr. Custis banned "intoxicants" from the Arlington Spring, the family recipe notebook indicated they served it in their home when they entertained.

The following recipe for Roman Punch is what Mrs. Zimmer says "gave rise to the saying, 'Ladies didn't take strong drink, just punches, and you could float out the door on them'". The following is Mrs. Zimmer's description of the punch and the recipe.

Roman Punch

This, the more unusual of the two, (punch recipes in Mrs. Zimmer's book) could have been served frozen in small glasses at multicourse Victorian meals as a palate cleanser, as sorbets sometimes are today; perhaps the Lees did not always entertain so simply after all. The cassis flavor comes from currant jelly. Black rum gives it depth, while sugar adds smoothness; the sweetness diminishes with cold. Since I give few multicourse dinners, I vary the proportions in this receipt to suit other occasions, always remembering that alcohol is an antifreeze. Made with 70- to 80-proof rum (35 to 40 percent alcohol), this recipe becomes a smooth, soft sorbet, a delightful summer dessert. More alcohol and less sugar produce a daiquiri-like cocktail that semifreezes. Or still-freeze it to a slushy consistency and pour it without ice into a punch bowl—sensational.

Unsweetened peach brandy is best, but a medium-priced regular French brandy will do. Black tea can substitute for green. Make it ahead to allow time to ripen. The quantity may be multiplied or divided.

Make a very rich lemonade 1 quart—add spirits to taste (brandy and rum) 1 quart strong green tea—half a pint of currant jelly 1lb & a half of white sugar—do not freeze too hard—

Juice of 5-6 lemons
3 c. sugar
1 c. (8 oz.) currant jelly
2 qts. Minus ½ c. water
1 c. brandy
2/3c. black rum
About 5-6 T. or bags of green or black tea

Heat about half the water with sugar and jelly, stirring to dissolve. Make tea with the rest. Combine the two mixtures. Cool, add lemon juice, brandy, and rum. Ripen overnight at room temperature or up to 3 days in refrigerator, then freeze if you like. Makes about 3 quarts.

From the Office Down the Hall (continued)

House has been largely drowned out by emancipation, railroads, and the blood of 600,000 Americans. A hundred and fifty years later, many Americans have a hard time hearing the creaking floorboards of our past and can only hazard a guess that Lee had something to do with the Civil War.

In large part, that is why we are here. Lee's decision was made in an evening, his footsteps then fading from Arlington two days later. Sputnik only lasted three months before its persistent beeps in turn faded in a

brief burst of flame. So many important things have happened in the intervening years—it is nearly impossible to sort it all out without a little help, without some way to amplify those lost sounds. Here at Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial, we can still hear the floorboards creak. We are here to help.

Kendell Thompson
Site Manager
Arlington House,
The Robert E. Lee Memorial

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please contact Delphine Gross no later than the 20th of each month with availability dates and times to be posted the following month (Please call by April 20th with May information). Even if you are a regularly scheduled VIP please contact Delphine to confirm your availability. Again, the contact number is (703) 235-1530 ext. 227. Please leave the dates and times you are available on the voice mail. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

April 2005

Arlington House VIP Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30	2 Marmie Edwards 12:30-4:30
3 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	4	5 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	6 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30 Gene Cross 11:00-4:00 Arlene Riley 2:00-4:00	7 Charlotte Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00 Amanda Bennett 1:00-4:00	8 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30	9 Elene Paul 10:00-3:00 Lisa Kittinger 12:00-3:30 Delia Rios 12:30-3:30 Marmie Edwards 12:30-4:30
10 J.B. McCraw 9:30-1:00 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	11 Jo Schoolfield 10:00-2:00 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	12 Kathie Lipovac 12:30-4:30	13 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30 Arlene Riley 2:00-4:00	14 Charlotte Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00 Gene Cross 11:00-4:00 Amanda Bennett 1:00-4:00	15 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30	16 Elene Paul 10:00-3:00 Marmie Edwards 12:30-4:30
17 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	18 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	19 Kathie Lipovac 12:30-4:30 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	20 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30 Arlene Riley 2:00-4:00	21 Charlotte Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00 Gene Cross 11:00-4:00	22 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30 Amanda Bennett 1:00-4:00	23 Delia Rios 12:30-3:30 Marmie Edwards 12:30-4:30
24 J.B. McCraw 9:30-1:00 Jim Pearson 12:30-4:30	25 Jo Schoolfield 10:00-2:00 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	26 Kathie Lipovac 12:30-4:30 Fred Hoffman 1:00-4:00	27 Jack McKay 9:30-12:30 Arlene Riley 2:00-4:00	28 Charlotte Needham and Elaine Street 10:30-1:00 Gene Cross 11:00-4:00 Nona Wartella 2:00-4:00	29 Joan Cashell 9:30-11:30 Nona Wartella 10:00-2:00 Amanda Bennett 1:00-4:00	30 Vanna Lewis 10:00-4:30 Elene Paul 10:00-3:00 Marmie Edwards 12:30-4:30

If you are available to volunteer, but are not on the calendar please call Delphine so you can be added to the schedule.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Arlington House
The Robert E. Lee Memorial
c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

<<Name>>
<<Address>>
<<CityStateZip>>

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The Spectacle is a monthly newsletter for the volunteers of Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial.

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Comments? Write to:

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Arlington House, The Robert E. Lee Memorial
c/o George Washington Memorial Parkway
Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Volunteers Needed

The roster of active volunteers is in dire need of additional names! If you know anyone interested in joining our ranks please refer them to Delphine Gross, Volunteer Coordinator (703) 235-1530 ext 227.

